His Majesties DECLARATION

To

All His loving SUBJECTS,

December 26. 1662.

Published by the Advice of His Privy Council.

EDINBURGH,

Re-printed by *Evan Tyler*, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1663.

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Majeſty, 1642.

HIS MAJESTIES DECLARATION TO All His loving Subjects, *December* 26. 1662.

CHARLES R.

AS it hath pleased Almighty God so wonderfully to restore Us to the Throne of Our Ancestors, and Our Subjects to happy peace and tranquility, without the least Bloodshed by the Military Sword; so having still earnestly wished that both might be secured and maintained with the least effusion possible of the same by the Sword of Justice, as desiring much rather to cure the ill intentions of the disaffected by our Clemency, then to punish the effects of them by rigour of Law: We cannot but express Our great grief and trouble, that the unpardonable, as well as incurable, malignity of some should have carried them a new to such traiterous practices against

Our Perſon and Government, as have neceſſitated Us to make freſh examples by the death of any more of Our Subjects. But as the publickneſs of their Tryal in the ordinary courſe of Law, hath, by their conviction, ſufficiently ſatisfied the world of the enormity of their Crimes, ſo We have thought fit at the ſame time that We are forced to puniſh, to endeavour as much as in Us lieth, the preventing all occaſions of the like for the future by this Declaration; Wherein our principal aim is, to apply proper Antidotes to all thoſe venemous Inſinuations, by which (as we are certainly informed) ſome of our Subjects of inveterate and unalterable ill Principles, do daily endeavour to poiſon the affections of Our good people, by miſleading their underſtandings, and that principally by four ſorts of moſt falſe and malicious Scandals, which We do look upon as the grounds of thoſe traiterous attempts.

The Firſt, *by ſuggeſting unto them, That having attained Our ends in re-eſtabliſhing Our Regal Authority, and gaining the Power into Our own hands by a ſpecious condeſcention to a general Act of Indemnity, We intend nothing leſs then the obſervation of it, but on the contrary, by degrees, to ſubject the Perſons and Eſtates of all ſuch who ſtood in need of that Law to future revenge, and to give them up to the ſpoil of thoſe, who had loſt their Fortunes in Our Service.*

Secondly, *That upon pretence of Plots and practices againſt Us, We intend to introduce a Military way of Government in this Kingdom.*

Thirdly, *That having made uſe of ſuch ſolemn*

Promiſes

Promiſes from Breda, *and in ſeveral Declarations ſince, of eaſe and liberty to tender Conſcientes, in ſtead of performing any part of them; We have added ſtreighter fetters then ever, and new rocks of ſcandal to the ſcrupulous, by the Act of Uniformity,*

Fourthly and laſtly, We find it as artificially as maliciouſly divulged throughout the whole Kingdom, *That at the ſame time We deny a fitting liberty to thoſe other Sects of Our Subjects, whoſe Conſciences will not allow them to conform to the Religion eſtabliſhed by Law; We are highly indulgent to Papiſts, not only in exempting them from the penalties of the Law, but even to ſuch a degree of countenance and incouragement, as may even endanger the Proteſtant Religion.*

Upon occaſion of all which wicked and malicious ſuggeſtions, although We are confident, that the innate Loyalty and good Affections of the generality of Our people, ſtrengthned by a due ſenſe of the late calamities brought upon them by the ſame arts, will hinder ſeeds of ſo deteſtable a nature from taking root, and bringing forth the fruits aimed at by the ſowers of them: Yet, We think, that in Our Fatherly care to prevent any miſleading of thoſe, who are ſo dear to Us, We owe unto them and to Our ſelves this publication of Our ſtedfaſt Reſolutions in all theſe particulars.

As to the firſt Point, concerning the Act of Indemnity; Certainly there can be no greater evidence, that the paſſing it proceeded from the clemency of Our nature, as well as from the preſent conjuncture of that Parliament wherein it was firſt framed

med, then that We have been pleased to make it Our special care to have it confirmed by a new Act in this, a Parliament composed of Members so full of affections to Our Person, and of zeal for the publick good, as We could never have cause to apprehend their exacting from Us a confirmation of any thing that had been before extorted, or had at present been judged by Us prejudicial to either; and therefore as We not only consented unto, but most earnestly desired the passing that Act at first, and confirming it since, as being no less conformable to Our nature, then conducible to a happy settlement: So We do hereby most solemnly renew unto all Our Subjects concerned in it, this Engagment, on the word of a King, That it shall never be in the power of any person or interest whatsoever, to make Us decline from the Religious observance of it; it having been alwayes a constant Profession of Ours, That We do and shall ever think Our Royal Dignity and Greatness much more happily and securely founded on Our own clemency and Our Subjects loves, then in their Fears, and Our Power.

Which most sincere profession of Ours may suffice also to expose the wickedness and falshood of the other malice concerning the design of introducing a way of Government by military Power.

It is true, that we should not think We discharged rightly what We owe to the publick Peace, and to the freedom and security of Parliaments, as well as to the safety of Our Person, if, whilest We daily discover such multitudes of distempered minds, and

such

such dangerous practices issuing from them, We should, for want of sufficient Guards, put it in the power of those rebellious Spirits, to undertake profitably at any time, what they have several times so madly attempted, for the ruine and destruction of us all. Of which certainly, besides the present occasion of new Precaution as well as new Severity, We suppose all Our good Subjects need not a livelier nor more moving instance, than what their memories can furnish them with, from the desperate undertaking of *Venner* and his crew, which (as mad as it was) We leave to all the world to judge, of how dangerous a Consequence it might have been, without that little strength remaining of those Forces, which (to give Our People a testimony of Our founding all Our security rather in their Affections then in any military Power) We had so frankly disbanded, and which afterwards by advice of Our Council, meerly upon motives of the Publique Safety, We consented to increase to that moderate Proportion, which was indeed absolutely necessary, and hath since been sufficiently proved to be so, by the security which We owed to them from the late dangerous practices.

But the reasons of such Precautions once ceasing, We are very sure, that what Guards soever may be found necessary for Us to continue, as in former times, for the Dignity and Honour of Our Crown, the sole Strength and Security We shall ever confide in, shall be the Hearts and Affections of Our Subjects, indeared and confirmed to Us by Our

Gracious

Gracious and steady manner of Government, according to the ancient known Laws of the Land; there being not any one of Our Subjects, who doth more from his heart abhor, then we Our Selves, all sorts of Military and Arbitrary Rule.

As for the Third concerning the Non-performance of Our Promises, We remember well the very words of those from Breda;

Viz. *We do declare a Liberty to tender Consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of Opinion in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the Peace of the Kingdom; and that We shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament, as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to Us for the full granting that Indulgence.*

We remember well the Confirmations We have made of them since upon several occations in Parliament, and as all these things are full fresh in Our memory, so are We still firm in the resolution of performing them to the full. But it must not be wondred at (since that Parliament, to which those Promises were made in relation to an Act, never thought fit to offer Us any to that purpose) that being so zealous as We are (and by the grace of God shall ever be) for the maintenance of the true Protestant Religion, finding it so shaken (not to say overthrown) as We did, We should give its establishment the precedency before matters of Indulgence to Dissenters from it. But that once done, (as We hope it is sufficiently by the Bill of Uniformity) We are glad to say, hold on this occasion to renew unto all

Our

Our Subjects concerned in those Promises of Indulgence by a true tenderness of Conscience this assurance:

That as in the first place We have been Zealous to settle the Uniformity of the Church of *England*, in Discipline, Ceremony and Government, and shall ever constantly maintain it:

So as for what concerns the Penalties upon those who (living peaceably) do not conform themselves through scruple and tenderness of misguided Conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way, We shall make it our special Care so far forth as in Us lies, without invading the Freedom of Parliament, to incline their Wisdom at this next approaching Sessions, to concur with Us in the making some such Act for that purpose, as may enable Us to exercise with a more universal satisfaction that Power of Dispensing, which We conceive to be inherent in Us. Nor can We doubt of their chearfull co-operating with Us in a thing wherein We do conceive Our selves so far engaged both in Honour, and in what We owe to the Peace of Our Dominions, which We profess We can never think secure, whilst there shall be a colour left to the malicious and disaffected to inflame the minds of so many multitudes upon the score of Conscience, with despair of ever obtaining any effect of Our Promises for their Ease.

In the last place, as to that most pernicious and injurious Scandal, so artificially spread and fomented of Our Favour to Papists, 'tis but a repetition of

the ſame deteſtable Arts, by which all the late calamities have been brought upon this Kingdom in the time of Our Royal Father of Bleſſed Memory, (who, though the moſt Pious and Zealous Proteſtant that ever Reigned in this Nation, could never waſh off the ſtains caſt upon him by that malice, but by his Martyrdom.) We conceive all Our Subjects ſhould be ſufficiently prepared againſt that poiſon by memory of thoſe diſaſters; eſpecially ſince nothing is more evident, then that the wicked Authors of this ſcandal are ſuch as ſeek to involve all good Proteſtants under the odious name of Papiſts, or Popiſhly affected: Yet We cannot but ſay upon this occaſion, that Our Education, and courſe of Life in the true Proteſtant Religion hath been ſuch, and Our Conſtancy in the Profeſſion of it ſo eminent in Our moſt deſperate Condition abroad among Roman Catholick Princes, when as the appearance of receding from it had been the likelieſt way in all humane forecaſt, to have procured Us the moſt powerfull Aſſiſtances of Our Re-eſtabliſhment, that ſhould any of Our Subjects give but the leaſt admiſſion of that ſcandal into their beliefs, We ſhould look upon it as the moſt impardonable offence that they can be guilty of towards Us. 'Tis true, that as We ſhall alwayes according to Juſtice retain, ſo We think it may become Us to avow to the World a due ſenſe We have of the greateſt part of Our Roman Catholick Subjects of this Kingdom, having deſerved well from Our Royal Father of Bleſſed Memory, and from Us, and even from the Proteſtant

Religion it self, in adhering to Us with their Lives and Fortunes for the maintenance of Our Crown in the Religion established, against those who under the name of zealous Protestants, imployed both Fire and Sword to overthrow them both. We shall with as much freedom profess unto the World, that it is not in Our Intention to exclude Our Roman Catholick Subjects, who have so demeaned themselves, from all share in the benefit of such an Act, as in pursuance of Our Promises, the wisdom of Our Parliament shall think fit to offer unto Us for the ease of tender Consciences. It might appear no less then Injustice, that those who deserved well, and continued to do so, should be denyed some part of that mercy, which We have obliged Our Self to afford to ten times the number of such who have not done so. Besides, such are the Capital Laws in force against them, as though justified in their rigour by the times wherein they were made, We profess it would be grievous unto Us to consent to the Execution of them, by putting any of Our Subjects to death for their Opinions in matter of Religion only. But at the same time that We Declare Our little liking of those Sanguinary ones, and Our gracious intentions already expressed to such of Our Roman Catholick Subjects as shall live peaceably, modestly, and without scandal, We would have them all know, that if for doing what their Duties and Loyalties obliged them to, or from Our acknowledgment of their well-deserving, they shall have the presumption to hope for all Tolerations of their Profession,

or a taking away either those marks of distinction, or of Our Displeasure, which in a well-governed Kingdom ought always to be set upon Dissenters from the Religion of the State, or to obtain the least Remission in the Strictness of those Laws, which either are, or shall be made to hinder the spreading of their Doctrine, to the prejudice of the true Protestant Religion, or that upon Our expressing (according to Christian Charity) Our dislike of Bloodshed for Religion only, Priests shall take the boldness to appear and avow themselves to the offence and scandal of good Protestants, and of the Laws in force against them, they shall quickly find, We know as well to be severe, when Wisdom requires, as indulgent when Charity and sense of Merit challenge it from Us.

With this We have thought fit to arm Our good Subjects minds against the practices of Our ill ones, by a true knowledge of Our own, of which now rightly perswaded, We make no question, but that whosoever they be from whom they condemn the spreading or fomenting of any of those wicked suggestions, they will look upon them with detestation as the most dangerous enemies of Our Crown, and of the Peace and Happiness of the Nation; and that what We have here published, will happily prepare them all to a chearful expectation of the approaching Sessions of Parliament, an Assembly so eminent in their Loyalty, and their Zeal for the Peace and Prosperity of Our Kingdoms, that having already made those happy Settlements for the conti-

tainance of the Religion established, and of Our just Rights, their full concurrence with Us, can no way be doubted in the performance of all Our Promises, and to the effecting all those gracious Intentions which (God knows) Our heart is full of, for the plenty, prosperity, and universal satisfaction of the Nation.

In order to which, although it be foreign to the main scope of this Our Declaration, which is principally to prevent the mischiefs aimed at by the scandals therein mentioned, and that wherein We reserve the enlargment of Our self till the opening of the next Sessions of Parliament, yet We cannot forbear hinting here, unto Our good Subjects, four particulars, wherein We think to give them the most important marks of Our care.

First, *In punishing by severe Laws, the licentiousness and impiety, which since the dissolution of Government, We find to Our great grief, hath overspread the Nation.* Secondly, *As well by Sumptuary Laws, as by Our own Example of Frugality, to [illegible] excess in mens expences, which is grown so general and so exorbitant beyond all bounds, either of their qualities or fortunes.* Thirdly, *So to perfect what We have already industriously begun in the retrenching of all Our own ordinary and extraordinary Charges in Navy, Garrisons, Houshold, and all their dependants, as to bring them within the compass of Our settled Revenue, that thereby Our Subjects may have little cause to apprehend Our frequent pressing them for new Assistances. And lastly, so to improve the good Consequences of these*

these Three particulars to the advancement of Trade, that all Our Subjects finding (as well as other Nations envying) the advantage this hath of them in that prime foundation of Plenty, they may all with minds happily composed by Our Clemency and Indulgence (instead of taking up thoughts of deserting their Professions or Transplanting) apply themselves comfortably, and with redoubled industry to their several Vocations, in such manner as the private Interest of every one in particular may encourage him to contribute chearfully to the general Prosperity.

Given to Our Court at *Whitehall*, this twenty sixth day of *December*, in the fourteenth year of Our Reign.

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